

Senator Hollings' Opening Statement

Hearing on

The Nomination of:

Linda Joan Morgan
to be Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board

September 28, 1999

I am proud to say that I have known Chairman Morgan for many years and while she is sitting on the other side of the table, I am pleased to see her back in this room. Although we may not always agree, I have a great deal of respect for her and know that two qualities she possesses in abundance are fairness and integrity. Those qualities, coupled with her commitment to public service make her an outstanding Chairman.

As many of you know, Linda Morgan served as counsel for the Surface Transportation Subcommittee for eight years and then as General Counsel for the Full Committee for seven years. During that time I found Linda Morgan to be one of the most intelligent and thorough professionals that I have worked with. She is smart and she cares about the issues -- I know that she is committed to her position as Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board.

Linda Morgan has served as Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board (STB) since it was created in 1995. Prior to that, she served as Chairman of the ICC. In 1995 she was responsible for implementing the changes that Congress envisioned in the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act. She pared down the ICC and established a new, more streamlined agency in its place, the STB.

Chairman Morgan is to be commended for her achievements and commitment to the mission of the STB. The STB operates with only 135 people, half the staff of its predecessor, but it is charged with regulating the entire railroad industry. Among her accomplishments, Chairman Morgan has facilitated creating a more efficient process for resolving rate disputes between shippers and carriers. Under her leadership, she has helped the private sector come to agreements on short line access and agricultural services arbitration which have benefitted the entire transportation industry.

Chairman Morgan has done an outstanding job moving the agency through several different phases. She successfully transitioned the agency in 1995 from the ICC to the STB. She has seen the railroad industry through three very large merger transactions. She helped resolve the service issues in the West. And last year she ended the practice of using product and geographic competition in determining appropriate rates for shippers.

Linda Morgan has done a lot of heavy lifting during her tenure as Chairman of the STB. She has my full confidence and support and I look forward to working with her in the future.

Senator Hollings
Opening Statement (cont.)

Nomination Hearing for:

Linda Morgan
Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board

Michael J. Frazier
Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs
U.S. Department of Transportation

Stephen D. Van Beek
Associate Deputy Secretary and Director of Intermodalism
U.S. Department of Transportation

September 28, 1999

I look forward to hearing from Michael Frazier, who is nominated to be Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs at the Department of Transportation. I am sure that he knows what he is getting into, but I can imagine that keeping up with Secretary Slater, the U.S. Congress and state and local elected officials will be enough to keep him very busy. There are many transportation priorities before this Committee that we will work together on: aviation, motor carrier, maritime, pipelines and hazardous materials issues to name a few. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we will coordinate our efforts on these matters.

Since Mister Van Beek has spent several years at the Department of Transportation already, he seems well qualified for his position as Associate Deputy Secretary and Director of Intermodalism. I have a great interest in this office since my state has many modes of transportation which are critical to the survival and growth of the manufacturing industry. Intermodal traffic is the largest growth segment of the transportation industry and one that certainly merits a comprehensive review and the focus of the office which you have been

nominated to lead. I look forward to hearing how you will strengthen the nation's ability to compete in the global economy and obtain the optimum yield for the nation's transportation system.

I appreciate all three of the nominees appearing here before us today and look forward to working with them.